

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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25X1A Comment. The following report gives the status of the Binh Xuyen forces before the fighting of 29-30 April 1955 in Saigon-Cholon.

1. The Binh Xuyen armed forces, as of late March and early April 1955, were organized into three regiments, eight battalions, and 26 companies, with a total strength of about 3,500 armed troops. Twenty of these companies were located in the Saigon-Cholon area, three companies were located in posts along the Baria-Long Thanh road, and the remaining three companies were located in Dalat.
2. Theoretically, the organizational structure of a Binh Xuyen battalion was as follows:
 - a. A battalion, composed of 450 men commanded by a major, comprised three companies.
 - b. A company, composed of 130-150 men commanded by a captain, comprised three platoons.
 - c. A platoon, composed of 30-40 men commanded by a lieutenant, comprised three squads.
 - d. A squad, composed of 12 men, was commanded by a sergeant.

Headquarters Companies

3. The Binh Xuyen headquarters, located at the Y Bridge in Cholon, was guarded by the 10th and 11th Headquarters Companies, with a total strength of approximately 250 men.

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1st Regiment

4. The 1st Regiment, commanded by Col. Thai Hoang Minh¹, with Lt. Col. Nguyen Van Hieu as deputy commander, was composed of five battalions, each organized into three companies. One company of each battalion was kept at full strength ((150 men) at headquarters, and the other companies were located at posts and in homes of the Saigon-Cholon area. Thus, the 1st Regiment had a standing strength of 750 men and a maximum strength of approximately 2,250 men.
- a. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Major Hoang Ngoc Can,¹ was in conjunction with the 2nd Battalion, in charge of the region southwest of the Binh Xuyen headquarters.
 - b. The 2nd Battalion, commanded by Major Vo Thanh Nghi, was in conjunction with the 1st Battalion, in charge of the region southwest of Binh Xuyen headquarters.
 - c. The 3rd Battalion, commanded by Major Mon¹, was in charge of the region southeast of Binh Xuyen headquarters.
 - d. The 4th Battalion was in charge of posts along the Baria-Long Thanh section of the Saigon-Cap Saint Jacques road.
 - e. The 5th Battalion, commanded by Major Thai Ngoc Xuan,¹ aka Tu Den, was in charge of the region south of Binh Xuyen headquarters.

2nd Regiment

5. This regiment, popularly known as the Green Berets (Berets Verts) was commanded by Lt. Col. Le Van Paul,¹ General Le Van Vien's eldest son. Le Van Paul was also in charge of Binh Xuyen financial affairs and was empowered to make financial decisions in Vien's absence. The 2nd Regiment, composed of three battalions, had a total strength of approximately 1,300 men, approximately 900 of whom were located in the Saigon-Cholon area.
- a. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Capt. Le Dinh Nghia, was located in posts in the Saigon-Cholon area.
 - b. The 2nd Battalion, commanded by Capt. Nguyen Tan Nhi, was also located in posts in the Saigon-Cholon area.
 - c. The 3rd Battalion was stationed in Dalat.

3rd Regiment

6. Prior to its deactivation in early April 1955, the 3rd Regiment was commanded by Lt. Col. Tran Thien. Although called a regiment, this unit was actually composed of two battalions at company strength. The mission of this unit's 300 regular troops, most of whom were recruited from among Catholic refugees, was to organize training and to protect Catholic refugees resettled at Dinh Donh, which was located on the outskirts of Cholon. This unit was deactivated at the insistence of Father Hoang Quynh, who became apprehensive for the safety and welfare of Catholic refugees subsequent to the skirmish between Binh Xuyen and Vietnamese National Army troops on the night of 29-30 March in Saigon-Cholon. Upon deactivation of this unit, its 300 troops were given the alternative of being transferred to other Binh Xuyen units or of being demobilized.

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7. The following reduced monthly pay scale in piasters had been in effect since January 1955 when the Binh Xuyen lost its lease on the Grand Monde gambling casino:

	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Base Pay</u>	<u>Allowances</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rice Ration</u>
a.	Major	1,000	450	1,450	30 kilograms
b.	Captain	800	450	1,250	30 do
c.	First Lieutenant	600	450	1,050	30 do
d.	Second Lieutenant	500	450	950	30 do
e.	Non-commissioned officer	300	450	750	30 do
f.	Enlisted man	600	0	600	None

8. An organization chart of the Binh Xuyen forces as of early April 1955 is Attachment I. Attachment II is a layout map of the Binh Xuyen headquarters.
9. A map showing the disposition of the Binh Xuyen forces, Attachment III, has been forwarded to the Department of the Army on a six week loan and will be available in the CIA Library upon its return.

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1. Comment. According to available information, the following casualties and changes in Binh Xuyen forces were reported during or immediately after the battle of 29-30 April 1955 in Saigon-Cholon: Col. Thai Hoang Minh attempted to defect to the Vietnamese National Army and was alleged killed. Major Canh and Major Thai Ngoc Xuan defected. Major Mon was seriously wounded by shrapnel; Lt. Col. Le Van Paul was seriously wounded in the stomach and is believed to be dead. See for Binh Xuyen strength in Saigon-Cholon area.

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The maps described above are available in the CIA Library.

Distribution of Attachments I and II:

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Distribution of Attachment III:

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